

REPORT.



The committee to whom was referred so much of the Governor's message as relates to the opening a navigable communication from Albemarle Sound to the Ocean, have had the same under consideration, and Report:

That the citizens of that extensive and fertile portion of North Carolina lying about the Albemarle Sound and its tributary waters, long have, and still do, labour under embarrassments the most discouraging to commercial, maritime and agricultural enterprise, (and to them entirely insuperable,) on account of the obstruction of the inlets which once existed at the foot of that sound; and, from all the sources of information upon the subject,* within the reach of the committee, they are satisfied that, not only the interests of that particular part of the State would be almost incalculably advanced by the removal of that obstruction, and by procuring for them thereby a free passage to the ocean, but the general interests of the State, in the encouragement afforded to industry of every kind; the increased value of real estate, the necessary result of prosperous commerce; the saving to our citizens the vast amount annually lost, in consequence of such obstruction (little less than \$200,000;) and in offering an inducement to them to remain in the State, instead of transferring their capital and industry to other States; and that the general welfare of the United States, would be thereby greatly promoted. The revenue would necessarily be increased in proportion to the increased amount of exports and imports. These must advance as the operative classes of the community find they can make profitable investments of their capital and industry, and as facilities are afforded and prospects of success presented to mercantile enterprise. Not only so; but a safe harbour would be thereby procured to our national shipping on a coast now the most dangerous and destructive to navigation and commerce of perhaps any other on the Atlantic frontier of the United States, at present affording no retreat, either from enemies or storms—an harbour, too, in the language of the United States' corps of Engineers, "precisely on that part of the coast where it is most needed." Your committee have deemed it unnecessary to state again the amount of annual exports from that section of country, and the losses sustained by detention, livery, insurance, &c. amounting to little, if any thing, short of the profits of the best voyage. They are facts that have been heretofore set forth in various reports and memorials submitted to the Legislature, and, it is believed, are too well known, and too sensibly felt, to be forgotten. †Every Governor of the State, for several years past, has made this subject an impressive constituent of his messages to the Legislature, and the people have long been importunate with their representatives to devise some means by which they may be relieved from this grievous and paralyzing obstruction to their prosperity. Thousands have already, by the discouragements of delay, been driven from the homes of their youth and the land they preferred, to look for others, more favored by nature or by national patronage; and there can be but little doubt that they will be followed by thousands more, unless an effort at least be made to place them upon a footing of fair competition

* Memorials from Elizabeth City, Edenton and Washington, and various Engineer's reports.

† Governor Iredell's message 1828

Owen's do 1829

Owen's do 1830

Stokes' do 1831